AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

1-22. (Canceled)

23. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 43, wherein degrading the image comprises reducing the size of the image.

24. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 43, wherein degrading the image comprises decreasing resolution of the image.

25. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 43, wherein determining whether the user is inactive further comprises determining whether a certain period of time has elapsed.

26. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 25, wherein the certain period of time begins when the image was last refreshed.

27. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 25, wherein the certain period of time begins when the image was last sent to the user's system.

28-29. (Canceled)

30. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 43, wherein determining whether the user is inactive further comprises determining whether the user is using the user's system.

31. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 43, wherein determining whether the user is inactive further comprises determining whether a screen saver has been activated on the user's system.

32. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 43, wherein determining whether the user is active or inactive is performed periodically.

33. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 43, further comprising:

increasing the quality of the degraded image to produce a less-degraded image upon a determination that the user is active; and

sending the less-degraded image to the user's system.

34. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 43, wherein refreshing the image is performed more frequently than determining whether to degrade the image.

35. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 43, wherein determining whether to degrade the image occurs substantially concurrently with a refresh cycle.

36. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 43, wherein the degraded image is sent to the user's system upon refresh.

37-38. (Canceled)

39. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 43, wherein determining whether to degrade the image further comprises determining whether a certain period of time has elapsed, wherein the certain period of time begins upon a determination that the user is inactive.

40. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 39, further comprising:

increasing the quality of the degraded image to produce a less-degraded image upon a determination that the user is active; and

sending the less-degraded image to the user's system.

41. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 43, wherein the network is the Internet.

42. (Canceled)

43. (Currently Amended) A method for displaying an image from a camera on a user's system, the method comprising:

executing, by a processor, at a site remote from the user's system, the steps of:

sending the image to the user's system via a network;

refreshing the image periodically;

determining whether the user is inactive, the user being inactive when a window containing the image is visually obstructed on the user's system;

adjusting image parameters over a period of time to produce a degraded image in response to a determination that the user is inactive, the degradation of the image increasing exponentially over the period of time to achieve a fully degraded image; ~~and~~

periodically sending the degraded image, during the period of time, to the user's system via the network; and

increasing quality of the degraded image upon receiving a user request to improve the quality of the degraded image.

44-45. (Canceled)

46. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 43, further comprising determining whether the user has provided any input into the user's system.

47. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 43, wherein the image is captured at a first location, wherein the user is located at a second location, wherein the first location is remote from the second location, wherein the user's system is configured to display the image.

48. (Canceled)

49. (Currently Amended) A method for displaying an image from a camera on a user's system, the method comprising:

at the user's system, receiving the image on the user's system via a network;

at a site remote from the user's system, refreshing the image periodically;

at the site remote from the user's system, determining whether the user is inactive, the user being determined inactive when a window containing the image is visually obstructed on the user's system;

at the site remote from the user's system, adjusting image parameters over a period of time to produce a degraded image in response to a determination that the user is inactive, the degradation of the image increasing exponentially over the period of time to achieve a fully degraded image; ~~and~~

at the user's system, periodically receiving the degraded image, during the period of time, on the user's system via the network;

at the user's system, receiving a request from the user to improve the quality of the degraded image; and

at the site remote from the user's system, adjusting image parameters to improve the quality of the degraded image in response to the request.

50. (Currently Amended) A computer-readable storage medium storing ~~instruction~~ instructions which, when executed by a processor, ~~performs~~ perform a

method for displaying an image from a camera on a user's system, the method of comprising:

at the user's system, receiving the image on the user's system via a network;

at a site remote from the user's system, refreshing the image periodically;

at the site remote from the user's system, determining whether the user is inactive, the user being determined inactive when a window containing the image is visually obstructed on the user's system;

at the site remote from the user's system, adjusting image parameters over a period of time to produce a degraded image in response to a determination that the user is inactive, the degradation of the image increasing exponentially over the period of time to achieve a fully degraded image; ~~and~~

at the user's system, periodically receiving the degraded image, during the period of time, on the user's system via the network;

at the user's system, receiving a request from the user to improve the quality of the degraded image; and

at the site remote from the user's system, adjusting image parameters to improve the quality of the degraded image in response to the request.

51. (Currently Amended) A method for displaying an image from a camera on a user's system, the method comprising:

executing, by a processor, the steps of:

sending the image to the user's system via a network;

periodically transmitting image refresh content to the user's system;

determining whether a window at the user's system that displays the image is visually obstructed by other content being displayed at the user's system;

if the window is determined to be visually obstructed, transmitting subsequent image refresh content to the user's system, wherein the subsequent image refresh content is degraded with respect to the image refresh content that was sent prior to the determination by adjusting image parameters controlling degradation of the image refresh content over a period of time, the degradation of the image refresh content increasing exponentially over the period of time;

determining whether the user has requested an improvement in the quality of the degraded image; and

increasing quality of the degraded image in response to the request.

52. (Currently Amended) A method for displaying an image from a camera on a user's system, the method comprising:

executing, by a processor, the steps of:

receiving the image on the user's system via a network;

periodically receiving image refresh content on the user's system;

determining whether a window on the user's system that displays the image is visually obstructed by other content being displayed at the user's system;

if the window is determined to be visually obstructed, receiving subsequent image refresh content on the user's system, wherein the subsequent image refresh content is degraded with respect to the image refresh content that was received prior to the determination by adjusting image parameters controlling degradation of the image refresh content over a period of time, the degradation of the image refresh content increasing exponentially over the period of time;

determining whether the user has requested an improvement in the quality of the degraded image; and

increasing quality of the degraded image in response to the request.